

Foreign Service Institute

SENIOR SEMINAR IN FOREIGN POLICY

Department of State



FIFTEENTH SESSION

August 14, 1972 - June 8, 1973

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

OBJECTIVES AND MEMBERSHIP

The Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy is the most advanced executive development program in the foreign affairs field offered by the United States Government. It assists in preparing select, senior career officers for positions of Ambassadorial and comparable responsibility.

The Seminar encourages free and vigorous inquiry into complexities of foreign policy and U.S. domestic problems and their inter-relationship. It aims to help Members become better managers, stimulate their creative powers, enhance their capacity for thoughtful judgment, and develop their leadership.

Senior Seminar Members are drawn from the principal Federal Agencies concerned with U.S. foreign relations. The Fifteenth Session has twenty-six Members, eighteen of whom are officers of the Foreign Service serving the Department of State, the United States Information Agency and the Agency for International Development. The other eight include one officer from each of the four Armed Services and civil servants from the Departments of Defense and the Army and from CIA and the General Accounting Office.

The Seminar lasts ten months and requires the full time of its Members.

COURSE CONTENT

Because the age of Members averages forty-six and their length of Government service twenty-two years, the Seminar can range fast and far in its studies. It assumes that Members already possess considerable experience and knowledge, particularly of foreign, government and military affairs.

-2-

After an initial week to introduce Members to the curriculum and to each other, the Seminar spends twelve weeks on domestic affairs. A three-week lecture and discussion series on the United States economy, including a study of the Federal budget and a review of national priorities, leads off this segment. Two weeks are devoted to reviewing contemporary American social attitudes and problems under the guidance of speakers deliberately chosen to present a wide spectrum of views.

Five weeks during the Seminar year are spent in group travel to all major regions of the United States. Members thus obtain first-hand exposure to state and municipal governments, universities, industrial centers, farms, and local citizens' organizations. In Washington, Members meet with Senators and Representatives, with senior officers of Federal departments and domestic agencies and with the Mayor and other officials of the District of Columbia.

Ten weeks are given to enhancement of professional skills. During this segment Members engage in intensive study of managerial theory and executive leadership, of contemporary theory and practice in economics and political science, and of the techniques of diplomacy.

International and national security affairs form the third major segment of the Seminar curriculum. Consultations with senior officers of the Executive Departments, agencies and services involved in the formulation and implementation of foreign and national security policy are the central feature of this part of the course. In conjunction with these sessions, the Seminar undertakes analyses of issues involved in our relations with major countries and regions. Two Seminar weeks are spent in group travel to military installations.

For six weeks, Seminar Members conduct individual case studies designed to expand their knowledge and expertness. Up to three of the six weeks may be spent in travel at home or abroad for field research. Members submit written reports on their projects and may be required to summarize and defend them orally before the Seminar.

The Seminar's final two weeks are given to summing up and to graduation.

METHODS OF STUDY

The Senior Seminar has only an administrative staff. It draws its "faculty" from the world at large, including, as opportunity affords, foreign statesmen and specialists. Members of Congress and other Federal and local government civilian officials already mentioned constitute part of the "faculty". The remainder is recruited from military leaders, university professors, journalists, businessmen, labor leaders, policemen and many others.

- 3 -

Sessions with visiting speakers in the Seminar's conference room are supplemented by field travel and by visits to agencies of the Federal Government and of the District of Columbia. Considerable time is set aside for in-house discussions, exercises, group projects and simulations. The Seminar also exploits the great and varied professional experience represented among its carefully selected Members.